

Immunisation Program . South Australia commencing 1 March 2008 Questions and Answers

1. Why is the Childhood Immunisation Schedule changing in South Australia?

There has been a disruption to the supply of the HIB-Hepatitis b vaccine Comvax. This means an alternative vaccine is required to provide protection against *haemophilus influenzae* type b disease and hepatitis b disease.

In South Australia supplies of Comvax (HIB-Hep b) vaccine will continue to be utilized for children turning 12 months of age from 1 March 2008.

2. What changes will be made to the Childhood Immunisation Schedule in South Australia from 1 March 2008?

Infanrix hexa will replace Infanrix/IPV and Comvax. Infanrix hexa is a six in one vaccine protecting against Diptheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (whooping cough), Hepatitis b, Polio and HIB. Infanrix hexa will be delivered at 2, 4 and 6 months of age providing a 3 dose primary course. Hiberix (HIB vaccine) will be given at 12 months of age as a HIB booster. This schedule will apply to all children, including Indigenous children.

3. Why is the change in HIB vaccine recommended for Indigenous children?

Previously indigenous children in SA were recommended to receive a PRP-OMP HIB vaccine (Pedvax or Comvax). This led to the use of this type of vaccine on the SA immunization schedule. With the disruption to supply of these vaccines, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has now advised that SA, QLD and Victoria can replace the use of PRP-OMP HIB vaccine with an appropriate PRP-T HIB vaccine for indigenous children. This allows the use of Infanrix hexa which contains a PRP-T HIB vaccine

The incidence of invasive HOIB disease will continue to be carefully monitored in South Australiaqindigenous population.

4. What if children commenced on Comvax and Infanrix/IPV and are due for their 4 or 6 month vaccine?

From 1 March 2008 all children due for vaccines at 2, 4 or 6 months of age will receive the Infanrix hexa vaccine and require a 4th booster dose of PRP-T HIB vaccine at 12 months of age. This will be given as Hiberix (PRP-YHIB).

5. If a child is due for their vaccines at 12 month of age what vaccine/s will they receive?

For a short period of time in 2008 children will present for their 12 month old vaccines who have received:

- Dose 1 Infanrix/IPV and Comvax
- Dose 2 Infanrix/ IPV and Comvax
- Dose 3 Infanrix/ IPV

These children will be due for HIB and Hep b vaccines at 12 months of age and this should be delivered as Comvax (HIB-Hep b). Supplies of Comvax will be available for these children only.

6. How is Infanrix hexa delivered?

Infanrix hexa is presented with a pre-filled syringe containing 5 vaccines and a separate vial containing the HIB vaccine as a lyophilized pellet.

NB The vaccine must be reconstituted by adding the entire contents of the syringe to the vial containing the HIB pellet before being redrawn back into the syringe prior to administration.

7. Will the change to the Childhood Immunisation schedule increase the number of needles children receive in their first twelve months?

The number of needles given at 2 and 4 months of age will reduce from 3 injections to 2:

1. Diptheria, Tetanus, Pertussis(whooping cough), Hepatitis b, Polio and HIB (Infanrix hexa)
2. Pneumococcal 7v conjugate (prevenar)

The number of needles scheduled at 12 months of age will remain at 3:

1. MMR (Priorix)
2. Meningococcal C
3. HIB (hiberix) or HIB Hep b (Comvax)

8. Where can I get more information?

Further information can be obtained by contacting the Immunisation Section on 82267177 or accessing our website.

www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/immunisation-index.htm